

E-rase Your E-waste

Electronic Recycling Event

September 15 - 16, 2006

Helena



Final Report

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I. Background

The Helena E-rase Your E-waste electronics recycling event is part of the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Rural Electronic Waste Recycling Program. This program was initiated after a request by Senator Dan Weinberg of Whitefish to organize an electronic waste recycling collection event in the Columbia Falls and Whitefish area of Flathead Valley. DEQ responded with plans to offer a series of community electronic waste collection events as pilot projects in the Flathead, Missoula, and Helena area. Upon contact from other interested communities and organizations, the three pilot projects grew into the Montana Rural Electronic Waste Recycling Program and events in Sidney, Bozeman and Butte were added.

Events held to date include:

Whitefish CollElectronics Event, May 26 – 27, 2006;
Kalispell E-rase Your E-waste Event, July 15, 2006;
Missoula E-rase Your E-waste Event, July 29, 2006;
Butte E-rase Your E-waste, August 24, 2006.
Sidney E-rase Your E-waste, September 8-9, 2006.
Helena E-rase Your E-waste, September 15-16, 2006.

The pilot projects provide opportunities to gather information and comments from the public while the department works to establish a sustainable electronic waste recycling program for Montana. The DEQ joined the EPA Plug-In to eCycling Program to maximize partnerships available for these pilot projects. Plug-In To eCycling is a consumer electronics campaign working to increase the number of electronic devices collected and safely recycled in the United States. Plug-In To eCycling focuses on three major areas:

- Providing the public with information about electronics recycling and increasing opportunities to safely recycle old electronics.
- Facilitating partnerships with communities, electronics manufacturers, and retailers to promote shared responsibility for safe electronics recycling.
- Establishing pilot projects to test innovative approaches to safe electronics recycling.

Partnership with the EPA Plug-In program has facilitated discussions with national retailers and electronics manufacturers regarding their involvement in Montana's pilot projects. Helena is the second Montana event to sponsored by Staples™ Retail Stores, and held in a retail location. Through partnerships and sponsorships such as this, the Department of Environmental Quality continues to explore models for an electronics recycling program.

II. Summary

Event Partners

The following businesses and organizations partnered with DEQ to conduct this pilot project as a public-private partnership.

- Staples™ Retail Stores
- S.A.V.E. (Students Advocates for Valuing the Environment)
- Lewis & Clark City-County Health Department
- Lewis & Clark City-County Water Quality Protection District
- Lewis & Clark City-County Solid Waste Department
- City of Helena
- Tatooine Electronic Systems, Inc., Billings
- Helena School District #1

Event Supporters

- Albertson's
- Pizza Hut
- Subway
- Coca-Cola™
- Real Food Store

Collection Event Focus Area

The event was advertised and available to anyone in Helena, or beyond. There was no limit placed on participation.

Hauler/Recycler

Tatooine Electronic Systems, Inc. an electronics recycling firm headquartered in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Tatooine opened a satellite warehouse in Billings in Spring, 2006 to collect electronics prior to sending to Cheyenne for processing. This is the second time Tatooine has worked with the Department of Environmental Quality on a collection event.

Staples worked with Tatooine on the Butte event and verified at that time that Tatooine recycling operations met their expectations of environmental responsibility. DEQ staff had completed a visit and satisfactory audit of Tatooine's operations in 2005. Staples and Tatooine formed a private partnership to handle the electronics collected. DEQ participated by assisting with outreach and education, and bringing together community contacts to support and promote the event.

Advertising and Outreach

The following venues for advertising and outreach were used:

- a. Advertisements were purchased in The Helena Independent Record (IR) and the Queen City News (QCN).
- b. Staples printed promotional bag stuffers which cashiers placed into customer bags for the week prior to the event. (See attachments)
- c. Staples printed large promotional posters that were displayed around the store and in windows.
- d. DEQ printed a tri-fold brochure promoting the event. The brochure was distributed by partners listed above.
- e. DEQ staff delivered brochures to over 30 businesses and requested that the information be passed on to employees.
- f. Information about the event was distributed by the Health Department through the department's monthly newsletter and emailed to all city-county employees.
- g. DEQ provided electronic copies of the brochure to Helena School District #1. The School District sent information to school employees promoting the event.
- h. The City of Helena posted a flyer in the window of the kiosk at the transfer station.
- i. The event was promoted on S.A.V.E., local government and DEQ websites.
- j. The Water Quality Protection District attached the brochure to an electronic newsletter which was sent to everyone on their mailing list.
- k. The Health Department arranged the media events listed below, and sent press releases and media alerts to The Helena Independent Record, Queen City News, MTN news, KTVH TV12 NBC and weekly newspapers in Lincoln and Jefferson Counties.
- l. PSAs were sent to local radio stations KBLL and KCAP.
- m. Listed in the local cable television station HCTV community calendar, and well as the IR and QCN community calendars.
- n. Jim Wilbur, Lewis & Clark Water Quality District, and Matt Elsaesser, S.A.V.E, promoted the event on Jay Scott's "Coffee Break" talk show which aired on Wednesday, September 13, 2006.

- o. Matt Elsaesser, S.A.V.E., and Jennifer McBroom, Lewis & Clark Water Quality District, promoted the event on Jim Nybo's "Focus on Helena" show which aired on the local cable television station HCTV.
- p. The Independent Record ran a large story on the event and included a large photo of used computers in the Friday, September 15th edition of The Montana Standard.
- q. KTVH TV12, the NBC Helena affiliate conducted interviews which aired on the 6:00 pm and 10 pm news on Friday, September 15. The station returned for a follow-up story on Saturday evening.

Volunteer Recruitment and In-kind Donations/Contributions

Staples™ Retail Stores sponsored this pilot project and raised funds for area schools, provided an incentive for participation, and paid the recycling bill for the collected electronics. Staples requested a \$10 donation for each electronic brought in for recycling. Staples requested the donation for Helena School District #1. At the end of the two-day event, participants had raised \$5,910 and recycled over 600 items. Staples presented a check of the donations to the Helena School District #1 on November 3, 2006.

Staples provided \$10 coupons as an incentive for participation. In return for the \$10 donation per unit, the participants received a coupon for \$10 off of a \$40 purchase at Staples. The donation was collected for each item recycled and participants were given a coupon for each donation. The coupon provides a good incentive to participate because the public may feel they are being rewarded for recycling, while feeling good about donating to a worthy cause. The donation request also serves as a reminder that recycling is an activity with costs.

For the purposes of this event, Staples determined that a computer, monitor, keyboard, mouse, and cables would be accepted as one unit. Other equipment, such as a printer, a scanner, a fax machine, or DVD/VCR were accepted as distinct and separate units. Staples always accepts small items such as PDAs, cell phones, and rechargeable batteries for free recycling. Ink and toner cartridges can also be recycled daily at Staples, and customers receive a \$3 coupon upon dropping them off.

The Health Department and Staples promoted the event together and cooperated on media outreach. Staples Corporate Office provided press releases and outreach to media outlets regarding the event. The work done by the Health Department and Staples resulted in very good coverage of the event. The Water Quality District worked with the Solid Waste Department to distribute information and arrange for donations of food for volunteers. S.A.V.E. conducted outreach to all of their supporters and distributed brochures in public places and businesses. The DEQ worked with the Office of Information Technology and the DEQ Public Relations Officer to distribute an electronic copy of the brochure to agency network administrators and state employees. Once again, partnership with community agencies proved key to the success of the event in drawing nearly 600 people to participate.

KTVH TV12, the NBC Helena affiliate, came to the event and interviewed the store manager, participants, and DEQ staff. The interviews were aired during the 6:00 pm and 10:00 pm news broadcasts. DEQ staff talked to participants that evening who said they had just seen it on the 6:00 pm news and rushed to bring their used electronics to Staples before closing. On Saturday evening, near the end of the event, KTVH came back to film and gather information on the success of the event. KTVH included a follow up story on the 10:00 pm news which informed viewers of the collection results.

Volunteer hours

Staples staff were grateful for the assistance volunteers provided to customers unloading and bringing in recyclables. The manager commented on the extra traffic that the Friday event brought into his store, and expressed his appreciation for the volunteer assistance. Over the ten-hour event on Friday, fourteen volunteers put in 58 hours of work beside store employees. On Saturday, ten volunteers provided 34 hours

of assistance. Volunteer hours were calculated at \$12 per hour and resulted in \$1,098 in donated time and effort.

Participants appreciated the volunteer help, and repeatedly thanked organizers and Staples for having the event. Participants were excited to have an opportunity to recycle, appreciated Staples sponsorship and asked for future collections.

III. Event Evaluation and Results

The event was well attended and participants were enthusiastic about the opportunity to recycle electronics. Occasionally the front of the store became congested as people proceeded through cashier lines to pay the donation and receive coupons, while others stood nearby completing DEQ survey questions.

The two-day retail collection event collected nearly 600 items and resulted in 23,557 pounds of electronics recycled. This pilot project resulted in 11.78 tons of electronics diverted from the landfill. Staples incentives and promotional support, combined with the outreach and promotional work of community partners resulted in a very successful event that was well supported by the community.

Evaluation

This event collected 23,557 pounds and provided a new recycling opportunity to area residents. The success of the event points to the interest in electronic recycling opportunities. All partners were pleased with the outcome and immediately began talking about holding more events.

Once again, a few participants were unaware of the request for donation to schools. Despite this, once the process was explained, most continued to participate and made the donation. Some people did refuse to pay, or paid only one donation for multiple items; the items were accepted anyway.

Participants were asked to complete a survey and those results are tabulated in Appendix A. Surveys were completed by 301 participants and many stated a need for future events. The survey revealed that the majority of participants learned of the event through newspaper advertisements, television coverage, and word-of-mouth. Most participants lived less than five miles away from the event, and the vast majority of participants were from residences. Twenty-seven businesses dropped off electronics at the two-day retail event. A majority of participants stated they were willing to pay \$10 to recycle used electronics equipment. A large number stated they were willing to pay \$5 per item for recycling. Nearly equal numbers of participants would like to recycle used electronics at retail stores or municipal recycling centers.

Staples issued 591 coupons over the two-day event and collected nearly 12 tons (23,557 pounds) of electronics. Over 800 items were collected. A break down of units received by equipment type and manufacturer are available from the DEQ (call 1-800-433-8773).

Table 1. Volume and Type of Equipment Received

Equipment	Units	Equipment	Units
Monitor	273	Laptop PC	4
PC	246	Surge Suppressor	4
Inkjet Printer	92	Bag Cell Phone	3
Laptop Docking Station	39	Cordless Phone	3
TV	34	External Hard Drive	3
Scanner	28	Flatscreen Monitor	3
Dot Matrix Printer	23	Microwave Oven	3
VCR	23	Palm Pilot	3
Fax Machine	19	Receiver	3
Laptop Computer	18	Scan/Copy/Fax Combo	3
Laser Printer	16	UPS Power Supply	3
PC/Monitor Combo	16	Cable Modem	2
External Modem	15	Car Stereo	2
External Floppy Drive	10	Cassette Recorder	2
Telephone	9	Direct TV Receiver	2
Answering Machine	7	TV/VCR Combo	2
Scan/Copy/Print Combo	6	Print/Scan/Fax Combo	2
External CD ROM Drive	5	Paper Shredder	2
CD Player	4	Misc.	37
DVD Player	4	Total	973

Table 2. Equipment Received by Manufacturer

Percent Rec'd	Number Rec'd	Manufacturer*
15%	126	Dell
9%	75	HP
8%	66	Gateway
8%	64	Apple
7%	55	Generic
5%	38	Compaq
4%	33~34	Epson, IBM
2%	10~20	AT&T, Canon, Lexmark, Magnavox, NEC, Packard Bell, Panasonic, RCA, Tandy
1% or less	3~9	Acer, APC, AST, Brother, Commodore, CTX, Daewoo, Digital, Digiview, Emachines, Emerson, Envision, GE, Goldstar, Hitachi, Hyundai, JVC, Leading Edge, MAG, Memorex, Micron, Microtek, Mitsuba, Motorola, Mustek, Okidata, Optique, Palm, Pioneer, Princeton, RIC, Samsung, Samtron, Sears, Sharp, Sony, Star, Toshiba, Umax, Viewsonic, Wyse, Zenith, Zerox

*Only units clearly identified by manufacturer and received in numbers greater than three are included here.

IV. Budget and Expenses

Due to the public-private partnership strategy used in this event, a budget for this event was never developed. Sponsors provided in-kind donations of equipment, materials, advertisements, labor and more. Two staff from Tatooine worked each day of the event. Tatooine's salary costs, as well as the salary costs

of the other sponsoring organizations were not provided for this report. DEQ costs, including salary and newspaper advertising costs was \$1,158.97.

Staples bore all costs for recycling the equipment. The event was structured around the \$10 donation to schools and the incentive coupon from Staples. The donation request brought extra media attention and additional volunteers, while acquainting participants with the costs of recycling. Tatooine provided two employees that stacked and prepared the recyclables prior to loading on the 53-foot semi-trailer.

DEQ printed thank you cards which were handed to each participant as they left the event. The cards thanked participants for keeping hazardous waste out of the landfill and for making the effort to recycle. It also directs participants to DEQ recycling websites and encouraged viewing the film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, to learn more about individual efforts to affect global change. A copy of the note is included as part of the Appendix.

V. Conclusion

On November 3, 2006, Sam Fletcher, District Manager, and Vaughn Cordell, General Manager of Staples presented a check for \$5,910 in donations to Bruce Messenger, Superintendent of Helena School District #1. Mr. Messenger expressed his appreciation for the community support of the event, Staples support of the District, and the benefit to students. He announced that the donation would be used to pay for GPS units to be used by students in a new educational program.

DEQ Deputy Director, Tom Livers, presented Certificates of Appreciation to the Staples store, and the Lewis & Clark County Health Department, Water Quality Protection District, S.A.V.E. and the volunteers present at the check presentation. Each partner was pleased with the results of the pilot project; Staples, the schools, and City-County Departments plan to repeat the event next year.

VI. Appendix

Appendix A

Montana E-rase Your E-waste Project Participant Survey Summary

Location: Helena, MT
Date: September 15-16, 2006

Total number of surveys taken: 301

1. How did you hear about this event?

Web page	19
TV ad	30
Newspaper ad	183
Flyer	31
Radio	25
Word of mouth	40
Other responses:	
Work	17
Email	10
Newspaper article	8
Store	5
School newsltr. or email	4
TV news	3
Other misc. responses	9

2. How far did you travel today to recycle your electronics?

< 5 miles	194
5 – 10 miles	77
11 – 20 miles	21
> 20 miles	9

3. Are your electronics from a:

Residence	280
Business	27
Other (school 1, govt. 2)	3

4. Who do you think should pay for the safe recycling of electronic products?

Consumer/user	148
Retail store	17
Electronics manufacturer	94
Government	19
Other responses:	
Combination of all the above	10
Recycler/whoever receives benefits	8
No one	3
Pay core charge at replacement	1
We'll pay one way or another	1

5. What is the most you would be willing to pay per item to recycle your electronics?

\$2	28
\$5	76
\$10	182
Other responses:	
\$0	8

6. What is the most convenient way for you to recycle your electronics?

Take them to a municipal recycling center	165
Take them to a retail store	136
Mail them back to a manufacturer	1
Take them to a local charity	63
Other responses:	
Does not matter	4
Pickup at home	3
Event like this	1
A "constant" site	1
Put in garbage	1

7. How many computer monitors and TVs do you have at home right now?

0 – 2	109
3 – 4	130
5 or more	62

8. How many households does your vehicle represent?

1	275
2	20
3	3
More than three	3